Cut in the Adivasi Welfare Schemes in Bihar

730. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that some Adivasi Welfare schemes in Bihar which are jointly financed by the Centre and the State are being curtailed; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) There is no curtailment of funds under Centrally sponsored schemes by the Government of India.

(b) Does not arise.

Progress in the Mandal Commission Case

731. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state what progress has so far been made in regard to Mandal Commission case pending before the Supreme Court ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : The writ petitions arising out of the Office Memorandum of 13th August, 1990 as amended by the Office Memorandum of 25-9-1991 are being heard by a nine Judge Constitution Bench headed by the Chief Justice of India.

The nine Judge Constitution Bench has commenced regular hearing of the case from 28th January, 1992. The bench has already heard three counsel representing some of the petitioners.

Arming of SCs/STs

732. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to arm the Scheduled Castes and other weaker sections to defend themselves against those who commit atrocities on these vulnelable sections of the society;

(b) whether Government have made such a recommendation to the Bihar Government if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) whether Government have made the recommendation to other State Governments also ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some suggestions were made to the Government of Bihar on which a response is yet to be received.

(c) Guidelines were ssued to the Slate Governments on 15-4-1985 by the Home Minister on prevention and control of crimes against Scheduled Casts wherein State Governments were advised to review the arms licences issued to such persons where serious crimes against SCs had taken place or potential for them existed and take steps for their suspension or cancellation according to the need of the situation.

Reported Boycott of Harijans in Dehradun

733. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : DR. Z. A. AHMAD :

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report entitled "Boycott of Harijans in Dehradun Villages" published in the Indian Express of 6th February, 1992 ;

(b) if so, the details in this regard ;

(c) the action Government have taken in the matter ;

(d) whether an inquiry has been made and report received ;

(e) if so, the details thereof ;

(f) whether those found guilty have been arrested and

(g) if so, the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITA RAM KESRI) : (a) to (g) Information has been sought from the State Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Inclusion of Koch-Rajbonshis in the Scheduled Tribe Lists

734. SHRI BHADRESWAR BURA-GOHAIN : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are contemplating to amend the constitution with a view to include the Koch-Rajbonshis of Assam in the ST list; and

(b) if so, by when the legislation is likely to be brought forward in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) and (b) The details cannot be disclosed at this stage. No specific time limit can be assigned. Any amendment in the existing list of Scheduled Tribes can be made only by an Act of Parliament as laid down in Article 342(2) of the Constitution.